



 Green+Leaders

2023
Annual Report

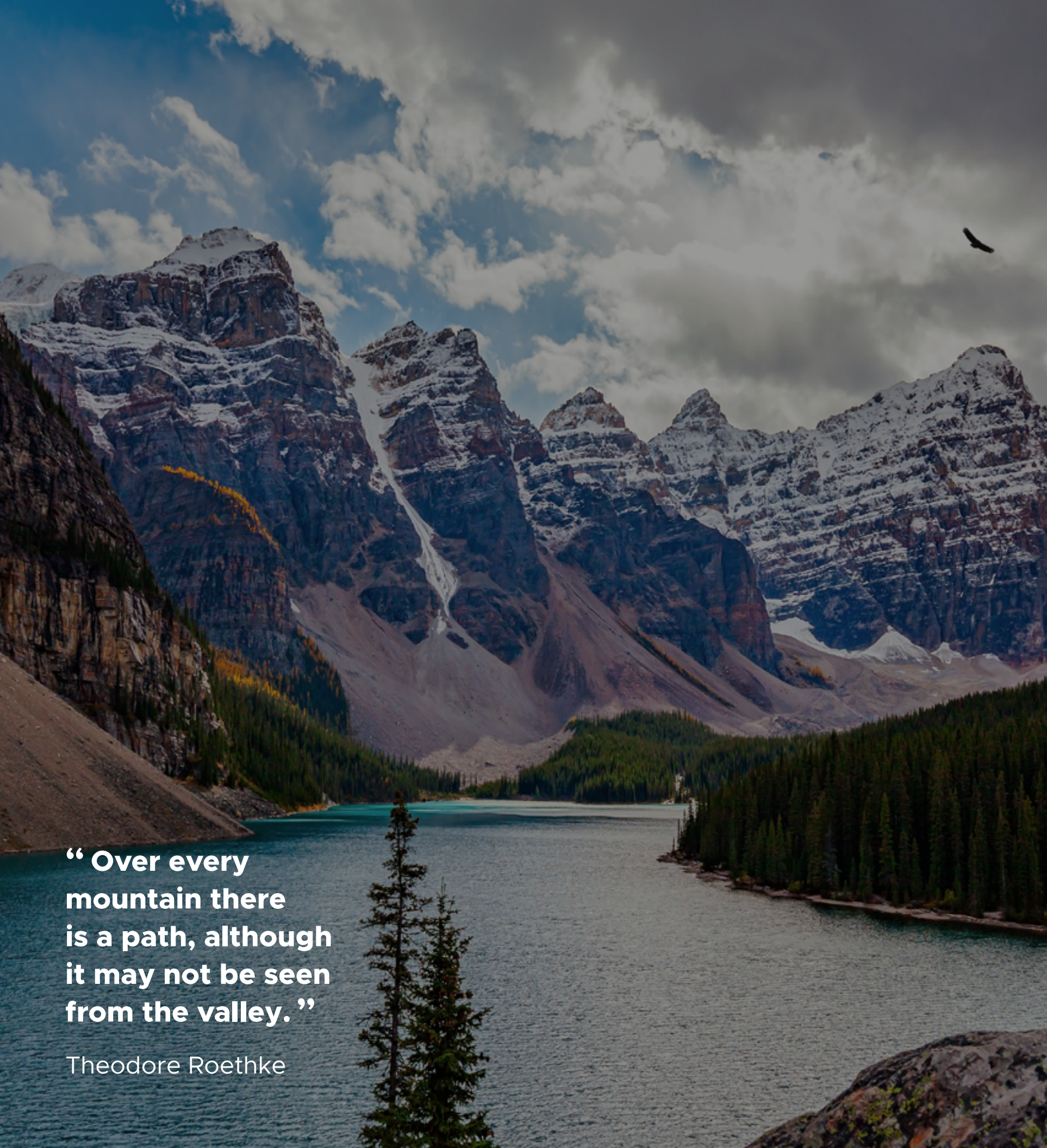


Honouring Indigenous stewardship

Indigenous Peoples have been stewards and caretakers of the lands, waters and ice, and leaders in ecosystem conservation since time immemorial. We understand that efforts towards reconciliation are directly tied to our relationship to the land.

There is much we can learn about environmental stewardship from these nations and communities. We acknowledge that it is an honour and privilege to receive teachings from ancestral knowledge and that we have a reciprocal responsibility to act on the teachings when we receive them.





“ Over every mountain there is a path, although it may not be seen from the valley. ”

Theodore Roethke

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Welcome! Together, we've reached new heights.

This report is a celebration of your dedication and contributions over the past year. In these pages, you'll find stories about all the ways that this community is leading the way to a more sustainable health-care system. This program now has over 400 active members who are leaders and innovators that consistently advocate for ways to improve the health of patients and our planet.

As you flip through these pages, I hope you'll feel motivated by your colleagues and discover dimensions of the Green+Leaders program that can help you advance sustainability wherever you work.

Your support for each other is something that inspires me. Last fall, I had the pleasure of organizing the Green+Leaders Recognition Event, which was the first time our community has had the opportunity to gather in person since the COVID-19 pandemic. The full-day event provided a needed platform for networking, celebration and knowledge-sharing.

The turnout was amazing, and your appreciation for each other and eagerness to both listen and learn was palpable throughout the day. Seeing how much everyone enjoyed coming together made the day a highlight of the year for me.

One piece of feedback we received about the event inspired my mantra for the upcoming year: "I cannot overstate how much I appreciated this event. It was incredibly well thought out, inspiring, empowering. More of this ♥"

More of this. Let's embrace more in the upcoming year. Let's be bolder, more determined and more ambitious. Let's drive more action, more positive change, and more connections and community. And let's dig deeper, look higher and climb further. Together, there is no limit to what our community can achieve.

On behalf of the Green+Leaders program and the Energy and Environmental Sustainability (EES) team, thank you for all you do.



Nina Akhtar,
Green+Leaders Community Lead,
EES team



Green+Leaders: Our sustainability base camp.



So what's it all about?

Green+Leaders are a community of health-care and medical staff taking action for environmental sustainability, and transforming health care for people, place and planet.

By joining the community, new Green+Leaders will have the opportunity to meet others at their site who share their passions, and get started building a team or launching a sustainability project. By connecting with other like-minded colleagues, they can even build a community of practice across different work sites and health organizations.

They'll also gain access to quarterly e-newsletters that share Green+Leaders stories, useful resources, sustainability tips and more. This past year, Green+Leaders received several sustainability grants, launched various initiatives and participated in several learning events.

And they won't be doing it alone. The EES team is always here to help with questions, address concerns and provide support on projects.

Know someone who's ready to gear up for the sustainability ascent?

They can register here.

[+ CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)

Check out what we do here.

[+ CLICK HERE TO SEE](#)



What do Green+Leaders do all day? A lot.

Zeroing in on sustainable health care



Seven environmentally conscious leaders in health care — Katy Chandler, Doreen Sharan, Theresa Khosrovi, Suhaila Jaafar, Natalie Varga, Gigi Wong and De-Ann Chan — were given the opportunity to attend the 2023 Zero Waste Conference, with their tickets funded via the Green+Leaders program. The conference, which included presentations, interactive workshops and networking opportunities, gathered professionals, practitioners, academics and government representatives from around the world. For these Green+Leaders, the conference catalyzed change within their roles and expanded their network of collaborators and co-conspirators for climate action.

[+ READ MORE](#)

Green+Leaders were busy making an impact in 2023

 **7** Green+Leaders attended the Zero Waste Conference

 **8,000\$** in funding received for sustainability project grants

 Created a YouTube video singing our planetary health carol


 Launched a Bring Your Own Water Bottle campaign

 Kick-started a Nitrile Glove Recycling Pilot Project

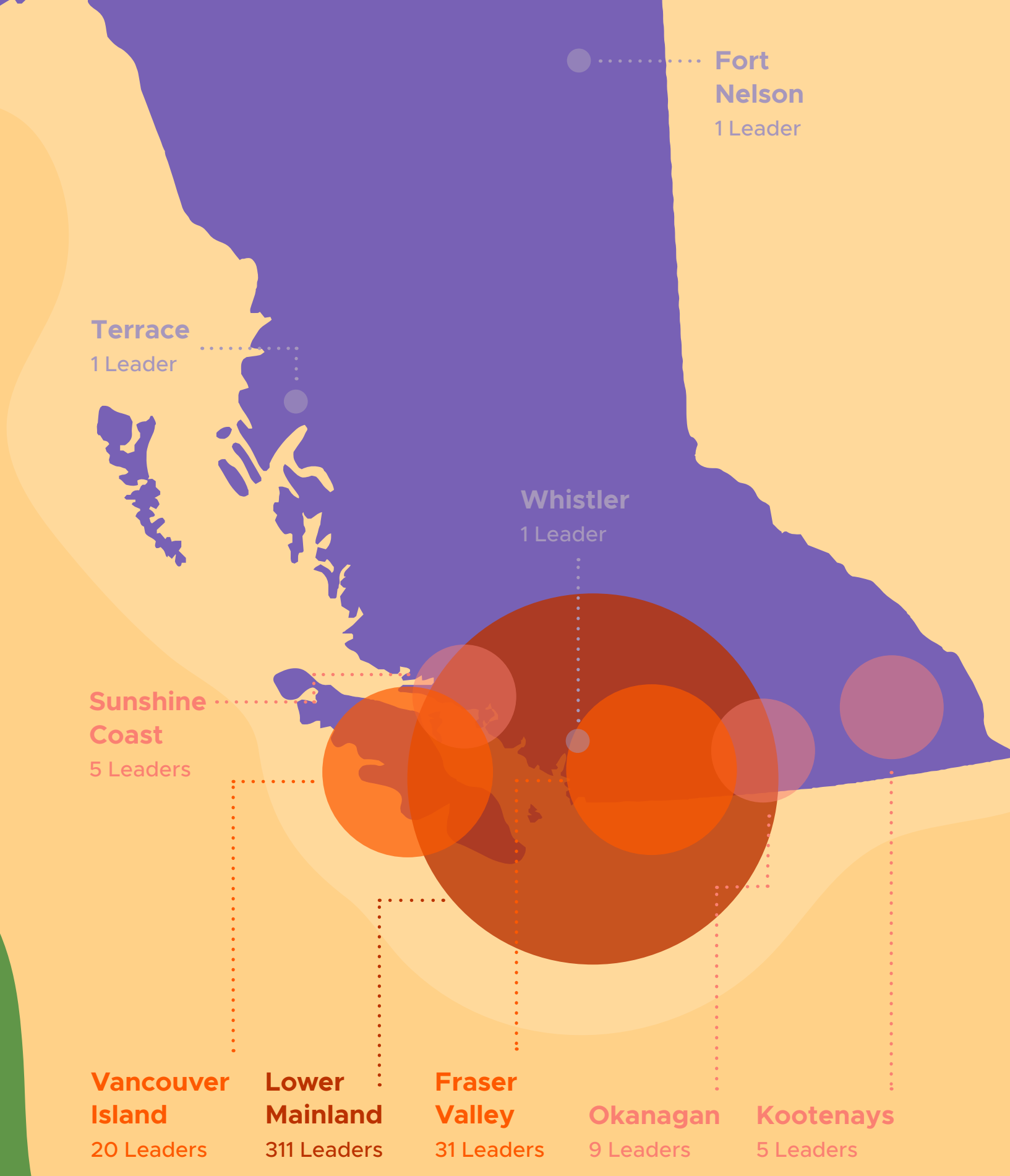
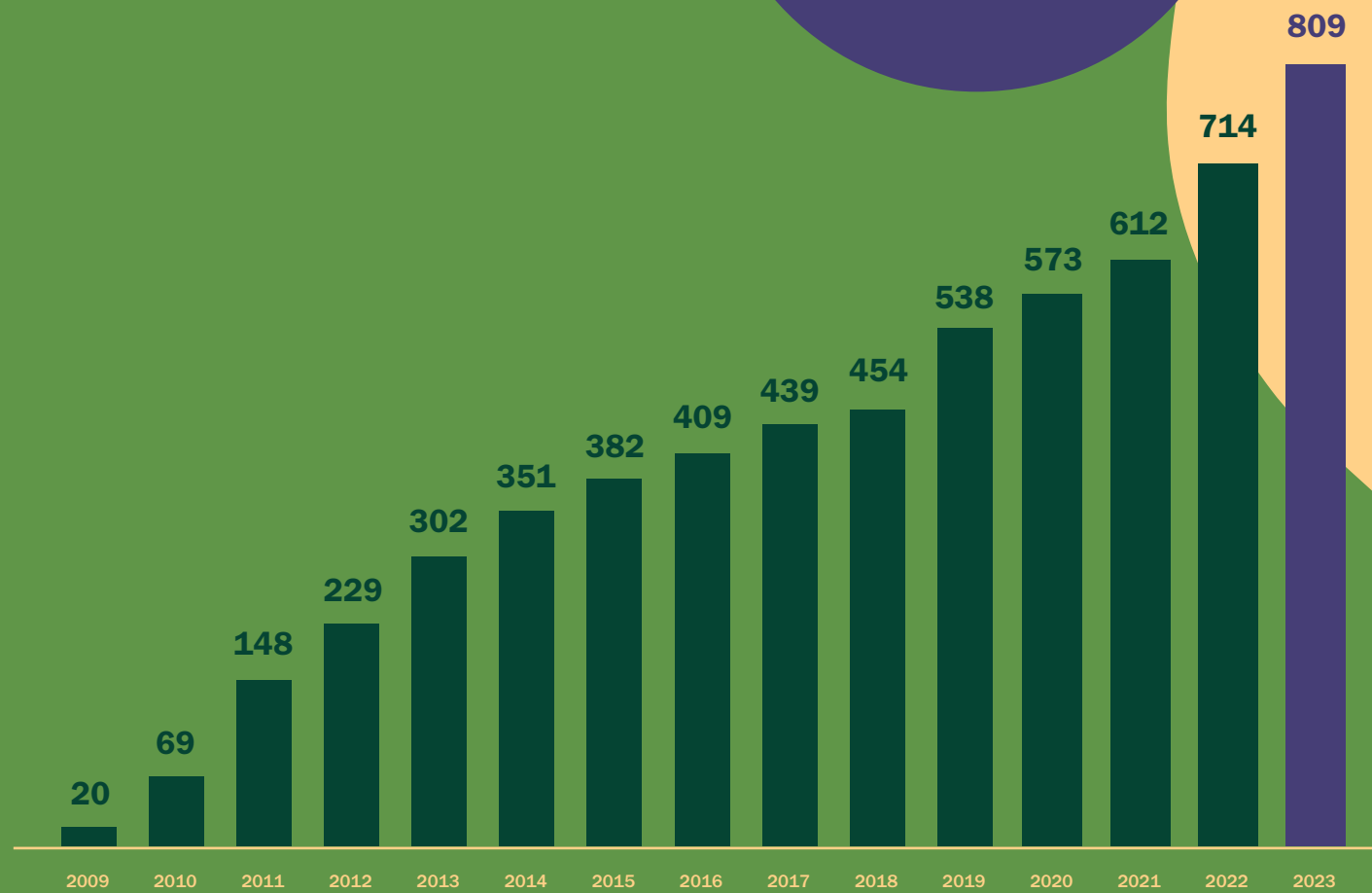
 Published research papers

 Conducted webinar sessions to advance sustainability in health care

 Implemented a Patient Garment Bag Reduction program

 Participated in staff surveys to collaborate in developing strategies

The Green+Leader community is growing



*Data about Green+Leaders is limited, but we have made every effort to accurately depict the number and location of active leaders.

Green+Leaders are breaking new trails in sustainability.

The strength of the Green+Leaders program is rooted in the steadfast support of our leadership. **In this section, you'll get perspectives from the Planetary Health and Environmental Stewardship leaders from each of our four health authorities.** In their messages, they share the strides they've taken, the hurdles they've faced, and their future strategies for realizing our shared vision of a sustainable, healthy planet for everyone. Spoiler alert: **The Green+Leaders program plays a pivotal role.**

Working together for planetary health

Each member of our staff is a crucial participant in this collective effort to green our workplace. It's not merely about creating an eco-friendly environment, but about unlocking the benefits of improved patient care and enhanced population health. As health professionals, we hold a unique role. We cannot only take on the challenge of minimizing the environmental impact of our services, we can embrace opportunities to be champions for a healthier planet. Our influence extends far beyond the workplace and into the wider community.

With that understanding, Fraser Health launched its first Planetary Health strategy in the fall of 2023. This five-year plan is not just a strategy — it's a promise to prioritize the well-being of our planet and its inhabitants. It's a commitment to address health and social inequities.

As we put our plan into action, we are shaping a future that prioritizes planetary health, fosters equality, and works to

create a sustainable and resilient health-care system.

Our Green+Leaders are the driving force behind so much of the positive impact we're having. In fact, several Green+Leaders are part of Fraser Health's Planetary Health Steering Committee.

Green+Leaders, you exemplify the spirit of change and our commitment to excellence. The remarkable stories about Fraser Health Green+Leaders included in this report illustrate the ingenuity, determination and ambition of our staff. The results of their work — from waste reduction to staff education — are a testament to what we can achieve when we come together for a common goal.

Green+Leaders make a real difference. We encourage every staff member and medical professional to join this vital initiative. Let us move forward with hope, determination and steadfast belief that each action, each collaboration and each individual commitment will leave a lasting positive impact. Together, we are the architects of a healthier, more sustainable world.



Karen Reutlinger,
Executive Director of Emergency Preparedness and Planetary Health



Darryl Quantz,
Planetary Health Lead

Finding Hope for Climate Action Through Connections and Knowledge



Dr. Erin Budd, a family physician and addictions medicine specialist with Fraser Health, believes planetary health is inseparable from personal well-being. Erin acknowledges the overwhelming nature of climate action but finds support in groups like Green+Leaders.

“
It can be really overwhelming, but it's great having these conversations with like-minded people because it inspires me not to give up. Being around people who are doing things to make a positive difference can really shift your perspective.
”

[+ READ MORE](#)

Towards Tomorrow



Jeevan Sangha is one of the leaders behind Fraser Health's first Planetary Health Strategic Plan. Currently serving as a senior consultant on the Strategic Transformation and Project Delivery team, Jeevan supports efforts to enhance health-care facilities' ability to withstand and respond to environmental challenges.

“
There is so much interest around planetary health within and outside of our organization right now.
”

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A Prescription for Waste Reduction



Dedicated members of the Medication Use Evaluation team at Lower Mainland Pharmacy Services, pharmacists Aaron M. Tejani, Isla Drummond and Deborah Heidery are not just dispensing medications. They formulate strategies to minimize medication waste, such as reducing the carbon footprint of metered dose inhalers, which contain potent greenhouse gases.

“
There is a growing awareness of medication waste in our hospital system.
”

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Actively participating in sustainability

The environment profoundly affects our well-being, and, as health-care professionals, we must set an example. By actively participating in sustainability efforts, we're not only reducing our impact but also improving the health of our patients and communities.

Sustainability is one of the five foundational principles of Mission: Forward, Providence Health Care's seven-year strategic plan. One of our key goals is to become a leader in environmental sustainability in the health-care sector in BC.

To that end, I'm proud to have established Providence's Environmental Stewardship Team (ESTeam) in 2022. With a focus on waste management, sustainable food practices, communication and education, and measurement and evaluation, the ESTeam collaborates on impactful projects, guided by our commitment to align with the Provincial Clean BC Plan. (One ESTeam member, Ramses Prado Mares, parlayed his data skills into an effective program to reduce the volume of nitrile gloves going to landfill — his story is featured in this report!)

The ESTeam was partly inspired by the Green+Leaders program. As a Green+Leader myself, I am part of a growing network of sustainability champions across the province. I believe one of the core strengths of the Green+Leaders program is that it brings people together from different disciplines and health organizations. Both the ESTeam and Green+Leaders program harness the unique skill sets and perspectives we each offer and channel them toward sustainable outcomes.

I want to express my gratitude for your contributions to this vital work. You are a foundational pillar in our efforts to shift our culture to one that not only cares for the "people we seek to serve," but also for the planet.

Thank you for your leadership and continued dedication.



Tony Munster,
Executive Director of Projects,
Planning & Facilities
Management at PHC

Sustainable Sustenance



Dietitian Laurel Aeberhardt understands the intricate connections between patients' health and the planet. Serving on Providence's Environmental Stewardship Team, Laurel advocates for eco-conscious choices, and stresses the need for more plant-based food options and reducing food waste in hospitals.

“
**Meeting our needs without compromising
future generations — it's time for a shift to
plant-based eating.**
”

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Glove Smart and Green



Ramses Prado Mares, a seasoned performance improvement consultant, led the Glove Smart Quality Improvement Project at St. Paul's Hospital's Cardiac Surgery Intensive Care Unit, reducing non-surgical glove use by 53% compared to the previous year. Ramses' involvement with PHC's Environmental Stewardship Team is a testament to his holistic approach to quality improvement.

“
As leaders, our job is to empower and guide them from ideas to action.
”

[+ READ MORE](#)

ESTeam Effort



Theresa McElroy brings a unique blend of strategic insight and a deep commitment to planetary health. As a co-lead for the Measurement & Evaluation working group within PHC's Environmental Stewardship Team, Theresa champions the use of data and information to drive change.

“
There are many ways to get involved, and every person's ideas and effort matter.
”

[+ READ MORE](#)

Being Eyhh slaxin (“Good medicine”) for our planet

Protecting the planet requires us to recognize the teaching of Nuts a maht, shared with PHSA by Coast Salish Knowledge Keeper Shane Pointe, Sulksun. The wisdom of Nuts a maht tells us that “We are one”. With natural systems being degraded to an extent that is unprecedented in human history, the health of our planet and those who live on it are in peril. At this critical time, we can choose to be Eyhh slaxin (“Good medicine”) and care for the planet as we care for our patients. Our societies depend on healthy people, flourishing natural systems and the wise stewardship of natural resources.

PHSA is committed to protecting the health and livelihood of future generations by establishing planetary health as one of its North Star priorities. While PHSA works towards a comprehensive strategic plan for

planetary health, we celebrate and recognize our Green+Leaders as a vital part of how we will protect the planet and its life-giving systems. For example, in this report you’ll learn about the great work of Green+Leaders such as David Hollingworth, Adrian White, Cara-Lee Claydon, Val Bernales and Katy Chandler. If you’re wondering how to support planetary health at your job, talk to your coworkers. You might be surprised how many of your colleagues share your sustainability values.

We applaud the leaders, frontline staff, allied health and clinicians at PHSA who are facilitating planetary health today and into the future.



Mark Goudsblom,
Executive Director, Planetary Health at Provincial Health Services Authority

Greening the Future of Emergency Services



David Hollingworth, a dedicated paramedic in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside, leads the BC Emergency Health Services (BCEHS) Bike Squad, reducing carbon emissions while responding to emergencies. David's latest project, the Idling Reduction Strategy, aims to reduce carbon emissions across BCEHS's vehicle fleet.

“
It brings me joy every time I get behind the wheel of [my electric] vehicle, knowing that I’m not emitting carbon.
”

[+ READ MORE](#)

Beyond the Bin



Cara-Lee Claydon and Adrian White spearheaded the Nitrile Glove Recycling Pilot Project at BC Cancer – Surrey's Radiotherapy Department. With a focus on staff education, the project successfully diverted 37,000 nitrile gloves from landfills between January and August 2023. Utilizing funding from the EES team, the project collaborated with TerraCycle® to recycle the gloves into new plastic products.

“
Innovation in health care isn't just about medical advancements; it's about redefining our practices for the betterment of our planet.
”

[+ READ MORE](#)

Homegrown Green Team



A new PHSA Green+Leaders team is just getting started at 1795 Willingdon Ave in Burnaby, led by two passionate advocates, Katy Chandler and Val Jan “VJ” Bernales. Katy and VJ's dedication to change goes beyond the workplace; it's a personal mission deeply rooted in their values of service and sustainability.

“
What we hope long term is to have more informed individuals who make conscious decisions to live more mindfully and sustainably both at work and outside of work.
”

[+ READ MORE](#)

Championing planetary health values

Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) is working to ensure that planetary health is seen as an important dimension of quality care.

In January 2023, VCH expanded its strategic framework to encompass four pillars: Planetary Health; Indigenous Cultural Safety; Equity, Diversity and Inclusion; and Anti-Racism. By prioritizing the social and environmental determinants of health, the pillars outline an approach to create safe, healthy spaces for everyone. Together, we can meet the needs of our patients, staff and medical staff, and safeguard the health of future generations.

To this end, VCH is developing a Planetary Health Strategy for 2024-2029. The strategy will guide our work to embed planetary health principles and climate resilience in all that we do. From clinical and business practices to facility management, we are working to ensure that planetary health is an important dimension of quality care.

Green+Leaders are the everyday champions of our Planetary Health values. We are especially appreciative of VCH Green+Leaders whose stories are told in this year's report. In 2023, they facilitated the development of facilities for cyclists, a therapeutic garden and worksite water conservation efforts, amongst many other initiatives. From Lions Gate Hospital to Sechelt, these changemakers are making a positive impact in their workplaces and on the well-being of their communities.

To all VCH Green+Leaders, we are deeply grateful for your dedication to ensuring our health authority is as resilient and sustainable as possible. Thank you for bringing sustainability to the front lines of clinical care.

Dr. Andrea MacNeill,
Regional Medical Director
of Planetary Health

Darcia Pope,
VP, Strategy, Innovation
and Planetary Health

Dr. Michael Schwandt,
Medical Health Officer

Maurício Acosta,
Executive Director, Facilities
Management and Business
Performance, EES team

Pedalling Toward Sustainability



Motivated by her belief that active transportation should be a priority in health-care project planning, Jill Brimacombe, a senior project director at VCH, paved the way for a new cycling facility at the new acute care tower at Lions Gate Hospital. The project is set to be completed in 2024 and will include more sustainable features like a roof garden and larger windows for natural light.

“
The bike facility reflects our commitment to sustainable commuting and staff well-being.
”

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Ripple Effect



In 2022 and 2023, the Sunshine Coast experienced the worst drought and water restrictions on record. Nurse Monique Roy-Michaeli took action by initiating the replacement of her office’s six outdated 13-litre flush toilets with water-saving alternatives — and achieved a 35% reduction in water use.

“
Since we are working in an aging leased building, the opportunities to improve water and energy efficiency are endless.
”

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Sowing Seeds for Mental and Planetary Health



Leo Gosselin, vocational rehab coordinator at VCH, uses gardening as therapy for mental health and addiction. With funding from VGH/UBC Hospital Foundation, Leo established garden spaces and a horticultural therapy program that helps clients develop confidence, learn new skills and socialize.

“
I see how the garden and the garden program lifts up and empowers our patients and staff.
”

[+ READ MORE](#)

Green+Leaders take the lead with workplace sustainability grants.

Annually, the EES team partners with the Health Promotion Initiatives Fund (HPIF) team to champion a dedicated sustainability stream at PHSA. Green+Leaders from diverse departments, sites and groups across BC are encouraged to apply for funding to coordinate and implement innovative workplace projects that take a holistic approach to supporting employee health as well as sustainability.

Showcased below is one project from the 2022-23 cycle.

Playing Together to Cut Carbon

Green+Leaders on the BC Cancer’s Clinical Informatics team motivated their colleagues to cut their carbon footprint through educational newsletters, regular check-ins, and some friendly competition. Through their initiative, supported by the \$1,000 HPIF grant, they achieved a 10% reduction in collective carbon emissions. In a world where climate change calls for urgent action, this creative project proves that small changes can pave the way to a greener future.

“Even in our daily lives, we can make a meaningful difference for the environment.”

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Projects in the works

In the year 2023, we received a total of 21 project proposals, of which eight outstanding initiatives have been chosen to advance to the next stage. These selected projects are now eligible for funding amounts of up to 1,000\$ each, supporting their implementation and contributing to the realization of impactful sustainability goals.

Project Title	Project Leads		Location
All We Can Save Circle for the Workplace	Tessa Diaczun	Veronika Gukova	BC Children's and Women's Hospital, Vancouver
Ambulance Station Garden Bed	Ken Leslie	Donna Schneider	BCEHS Stn 155, Gold River
Biodiverse Calming Area	Scott Lequesne	Darlene Clausen	BCEHS Stn 337, Vernon
Countertop Composter	Shauna Speers	Jessica Landing	BCEHS Stn 413, Golden
Green Initiative Program	Margaret Symon	Jeff Hutchinson	BCEHS Stn 119, Lake Cowichan
Clean, Green Kitchen and Healthy Eating	Kendra Tapescott	Genevieve Larrivee	Vancouver
Climate Café for Staff	Kendall McSweeney	Elise Millett	Vancouver
Provincial Public Health Information Systems Team Wellness Garden	Dega Hersi	Vanessa Amaral	Vancouver

Recognizing Green+Leaders. We see you!

On October 26, 2023, the Green+Leaders Recognition Event united sustainability advocates from BC health authorities, fostering connections among over 100 attendees. The day featured workshops on change management and the circular economy, and countless opportunities to network. In the afternoon, Green+Leaders from each of the four health authorities shared inspiring success stories. The event concluded with a keynote by journalist Charla Huber, leaving participants inspired and eager to continue the journey towards sustainable health care.

[+ READ MORE](#)




The Green+Leaders program is here to help.

Sharing knowledge

 **107**

Health-care staff completed the Going Green at Work module on Learning Hub

3  Newsletters

8  Bulletins

Networking for change

 **64**

Green+Leaders attended the Annual Recognition Event

5  Green+Leader Orientation Sessions

46  Orientation attendees

Envisioning a sustainable future

Guided by UBC graduate student Eunice Bawafaa, EES and BC Cancer collaborated on a project to interview health-care professionals about their relationship to sustainable health-care practices. Participants demonstrated a strong commitment to sustainable activities, envisioning a future where walking or cycling to work, reducing waste and driving electric cars are the norm. Participants also proposed resilient strategies, envisioning a future where care for people and the planet are seamlessly integrated.

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What's on the horizon?

In 2024, our commitment to fostering a culture of environmental sustainability within our health-care organizations remains steadfast. Building on the successes of the previous year, we will intensify our efforts to raise awareness among both staff and leadership about the importance of adopting low-carbon, climate-resilient and environmentally sustainable practices in health care.

In addition to motivating more health-care staff to join the Green+Leaders community, we are excited to announce the creation of more opportunities to connect and share ideas, experiences and best practices in sustainability. Furthermore, we will enhance opportunities for increasing awareness and education in sustainability and planetary health, ensuring that our staff are well-informed and equipped to make informed decisions for a healthier planet.

We're also actively looking for more ways to better support Green+Leaders on their sustainability journey, including by establishing new Green Teams and committees and providing dedicated spaces for collaborative efforts. By fostering an environment of open

communication, we are committed to understanding and addressing the unique challenges and aspirations of our teams, so staff have the support they need to make a meaningful impact.

Together, as a united and environmentally conscious health-care community, we are not only dedicated to reducing our environmental impact but also to creating a lasting legacy of sustainability and resilience for the benefit of current and future generations.

**“ We are as much
alive as we keep
the Earth alive. ”**

Chief Dan George,
Tsleil-Waututh Nation



Did we “peak” your interest?

Thank you for reading this year’s report. We appreciate your interest in and commitment to environmental sustainability and leadership in your workplace and planetary health.

“Every mountain top is within reach if you just keep climbing.”

Barry Finlay



Become a Green+Leader

If you aren’t already a Green+Leader, we encourage you to join. It’s a great way to make a difference and create the world you seek for yourself, your family and friends, and your community.

[+ JOIN NOW](#)



Tell Us What You Think

We’re always looking for ways to grow, improve and connect. If you have questions or comments, we’d value hearing from you.

[+ CONTACT US](#)



Learn More about GreenCare

GreenCare is BC’s health-care network for environmentally sustainable and resilient care, featuring news, progress updates, sustainability toolkits, events and much more.

[+ VISIT THE WEBSITE](#)



A special thanks to [Be the Change Group](#)
for their work in creating this year's report.



On the cover (from left to right)

Top: Katy Chandler and VJ Bernales, Green Team; Corinne Thompson, Radiation Therapist; Rebecca Struvig de Groot, Registered Nurse; Deshpal Grewal, Community Health Specialist.

Middle: Adrian White, Radiation Therapy Provincial Programs Manager; Elaine Chu, Food Operations Regional Manager; Annie Lalande, Surgery Resident.

Bottom: Nisha Mattu, Registered Nurse; Rick Molnar, Senior Manager, Facilities Maintenance & Operations.